

What the War Brides Find When their Soldiers Return



It was not so long ago that every one was interested sentimentally or otherwise in the arrival in America of bevy of pretty war brides.

It was admitted, of course, that it was all very romantic, the inclination of the soldier left on foreign duty to fall in love with the attractive—and near at hand—German and French girls, but it was admitted, too, that it was very imprudent of the lovelorn young soldier boys to really get married. This applied, of course, mostly to the soldiers of the regular army or those who had reenlisted and who intended to remain in the service.

"What in the world," the question was, "can a private soldier do with a wife, especially a young wife, very apt to chafe under army discipline and fret about her husband's having to take orders from so many superiors?"

Really, such a bride hardly could call her home life her own; there could be no sitting for a chat over breakfast; no lingering over lunch; nothing at all that would interfere with her husband's ridiculous drilling!

So there is a great deal of wonder just now as to how it's all worked out. What has become of the war brides and their soldier heroes? And how surprising it seems that privates in the army really can keep their wives in quite the same luxury allotted the wives of noncommissioned officers! It's all come about as one of the peculiarities of the "new army."

Divorces are so rare as to be almost unheard of. In a period of two years the writer has heard of only one.

The married officers have quarters of their own set apart. The nature of the officers' quarters is strictly dependent upon the post, camp or station. At Governors Island and other old and long established army posts the officers' quarters are very comfortable. They are somewhat crowded at Governors Island now. At the Presidio, in San Francisco, and at Fort Sam Houston, in San Antonio, much the same comfortable conditions prevail.

But that is rather generally known—or guessed. It is not so well known that the enlisted married men are extraordinarily well cared for, that their families are housed and their children educated. It is true that in the old posts the married noncommissioned officer is as well or better cared for than the married junior officers—lieutenants.

Lived Better as Private's Wife Than as Banker's Daughter

A private soldier in the army on the Rhine married a distant relative of the House of Hohenzollern. The father of the bride was the president of a bank in a sizable German city. It is an amazing fact that the wife of this private in the American army lived like a princess, far better than she had lived as the daughter of a bank president. With the provisions made by the army for its married personnel, with the additional pay for foreign service and with the exceedingly favorable exchange rate, the private and his wife were most affluent.

Now that they are back in America and he is out of the army, the young woman is washing dishes and making herself generally housewife, but their first few married months, spent in Germany, were exceedingly pleasant and without troublesome features at all. Perhaps he would have been wiser and his wife much happier if he had stayed in the army. They would have been assured then of a comfortable home without rent worries. But it is barely possible that he and his wife might have been sent to one of the newer stations. Then it would not have been so pleasant.

It is in army camps and stations, mostly located in the cantonments built by 10 per cent. cost plus contractors where conditions prevail which were described by Gen. Harbord recently as "quarters unfit to house either convicts or lunatics."

It is in these crumbling relics of the world war that army officers and men have a hard time of it taking care of their

families. To the married officers are allotted shacks which would not even be used for a woodshed by civilians; the bachelor officers as a rule are quartered in tiny little cubbyholes—and the single men are quartered in barracks the cracks of which usually show tendencies of opening to the four winds of heaven.

But just such shacks as these give the women of the army an opportunity to show their mettle. It is wonderful to see just what their clever hands can do toward making comfortable homes of places which at first appear to be almost godforsaken in their barrenness. A touch of enamel and of paint and rough boards become smooth, and a few flowers planted in almost any soil will grow luxuriantly if tended with care.

Making Comfortable Quarters Appeals to Army Women

Making comfortable quarters out of places of discomfort is the job which falls to the army woman. And nobly she performs it, as take the testimony of a bachelor who has often looked upon her work from the windows of the bachelor quarters, in which clothing, guns, pistols and other equipment showed that it was the abode of man, mere man with no refining influences to civilize him.

Indeed, so much is ours a marrying army that the bachelor officer and soldier is far less comfortable than his married brother. The theory seems to be bachelors can live anywhere and get along anyhow, which, of course, is exactly right, but once in a while it does come with just a wee bit of strain to look over the married quarters, hear the sound of pianos and of song and then turn wearily back and give the prosaic traveling phonograph (your only musical equipment), the once over and then wistfully go off somewhere for rest and recreation.

In only one thing has the bachelor in the army any advantage over the married man. This is that if a traveling officer comes he has only to pack and march, leaving no wife behind to worry, and not having to bother with packing and crating and shipping the hundred and one things that the army benedict accumulates. Incidentally just on account of this, bachelors usually get the brisk, emergency assignments, it being the currently held theory, based on long practice, that any bach-

elor needs only fifteen minutes' notice to travel to China or elsewhere. But enough of the bachelors—we don't count anyhow. Married officers and their families, of course, have homes very much as civilian families have, the size of these and their comfort depending largely upon the rank of the officer. The lieutenants who are married are the boys who have a hard time of it, according to the married lieutenants themselves, for usually just about the time they get their quarters fixed up beautifully along comes an order and they move and some one else moves in to the little nest on which he has worked for months. *Mais c'est la guerre.*

But the enlisted married men are the ones who really benefit by matrimony in the army. As has been said, the soldier is a marrying man. Give him the moonlight, give him a girl and leave the rest to him. His amiable weakness in this respect is known to the girls near posts and camps in the United States. The mademoiselles of la belle France have heard his whispered words beneath the stars. The red cheeked maidens of Luxemburg and Belgium have yielded to his importunities. The frauleins of Germany have come to know him as an honorable lover with serious intentions and maids of Merrie England in many cases have joined him in an alliance which brought them to the posts and camps of the little old regular army—an army which guards its own.

Nothing which the army can give is too good for the soldier and his bride. In no other army in the world is there so large a proportion of married men, and when the enlisted soldier marries he becomes at once entitled to privileges of a high order. Somewhere in some blue book or another is the ghost of a regulation now long deceased which says that a soldier must ask permission of his commanding officer before he marries. This is usually honored more by the breach than by the observance, for what can be done when the American soldier trustfully appears in the orderly room with the announcement that he "has gone and done it"? There is only one thing to be done—take care of them; and harassed commanding officers at once get to work to assign quarters to the new

couple, and harried quartermasters watch the scant stock of composition board and lumber diminish. When the enlisted soldier brings a wife home from abroad she is treated exactly as though she were the wife of an officer. She is given first class passage to this country. The benedict, however, travels according to his rank. If he is a private he travels with the men of the company in the quarters assigned the organization. If he is a noncommissioned officer, he is given quarters which usually are compatible to his grade.

But the bride—there is no rank for women in this man's army—gets the best that the army can offer her. If the husband is a noncommissioned officer he is given quarters which usually are somewhat better than those given to a lieutenant. In permanent posts these consist of little bungalows or apartments which any woman would find "cute." If he is a private he is given smaller quarters, but usually draws about two rooms, bath and all modern arrangements.

In addition to his quarters the married enlisted man is given what is called commutation rations, as he eats at home, in other words, he is given the cash value of his ration and is also permitted to buy from army stores on credit at cost price. If his wife or his children become ill there is a physician sent to the house at once. If the sickness is severe the hospital takes in the sufferer and gives every possible care. If death enters the household the post, if it is a small one, goes into mourning, for nowhere in the world is there a stronger feeling of comradeship than in the regular army.

This feeling of comradeship, this mutual respect of officer and man, is the foundation of discipline. When men are long in the same organization this spirit breeds a real affection. To those who think the army hard boiled it should come as a pleasant surprise to learn that it is quite the usual thing for officers and men who have served together and separated to shake hands and chat a bit on meeting once more.

There is a certain general in the army who, wherever he goes, is greeted by some

man or another who served with him. Critics of the army who profess to believe the service is one of snobbery should see the "Old Boy" on these occasions. Out goes his hand, his eyes twinkling: "Well, well, well, Sergeant—glad to see you! Damn glad to see you. How's the Missus and the kids?" "Fine, sir."

It is a greeting between two comrades in a common cause. Officially, of course, there would be the formality which regulations impose, but unofficially these things are waived when to waive them is both good taste and common sense.

Critics of the army say that West Point breeds snobbery. Many an officer who is not a West Pointer can and does readily say that such outbursts as these are simply based on as foul a misconception of as fine a group of men as have ever served this country. The West Pointer, indeed, in the army sets the example of true democracy—the treating of all men fairly and squarely—and old soldiers are quick to say that West Pointers are the very first of all to go out of their way to help the men of their commands. They labor long hours with enlisted men who are ambitious to teach them things entirely outside the routine of military service which the men wish to know for their own advancement.

The West Pointer, indeed, is prone to deal with his men not as a martinet but as what he is trained to be—a leader, whom the men will follow through sheer pride. **Old 'Noncoms' Factor**

In developing raw men Next to the officer in developing the spirit of the army is the old noncommissioned officer. Keen he is and canny he is and wise to the ways of man and maid. More often than not he has entered the army as a "kid" and has made his way up through one enlistment after another, getting a touch of the Philippines, a taste of China and a "look see" in on Japan on his journeys around the world. These are the backbone of the army—these noncoms—and most of them are married and have children—many children.

For example, last year in one army camp the Colonel visited the army school one bright day, returned to his headquarters and sent for the only lieutenant in the regiment who was a bachelor. "Lieutenant," he said genially, "we need a playground down at the school—build one. We need a volley ball court, four

swings, two parallel bars and a slide for the kiddies; build them."

The lieutenant did not know what a volley ball looked like, and since he was a bachelor it was quite natural that his ignorance of children was profound—but anyhow he got a detail of men, secured some lumber from the quartermaster and some cinders from the pile which nobody was watching. He proceeded to build. In four days he had everything about the playgrounds complete but the slide. He did not know how to make a slide, but he had ingenuity and an experimental turn of mind. He made something as nearly like a slide as he could conceive.

It was a disproportionate looking thing. It reared its great gaunt frame about thirty feet in the air. It had two tracks in which small wheels formerly belonging to an army truck were calculated to fit nicely. The vehicle was built on wheels. It looked something like a sled which lacked the grace and lightness of a sled. The wooden tracks were greased, and a volunteer climbed up to the top of the contraption, dragging the vehicle with him. He offered to take the first ride, but it was decided that a bag of potatoes might more safely take the initial trip on the slide.

Since the lieutenant was a bachelor he entirely overlooked the law of inertia and the sled started, gained momentum, and made as fine a glide as ever had been seen. The sled stopped—the bag of potatoes did not stop. It kept on at a terrific speed and crashed through a window of the school—that was the psychological moment for the Colonel to be on hand—and he was.

"Lieutenant," he said, mildly, "is this a new patent to assure attendance?" Every possible effort was made to correct the slight deficiency which caused the slide to function so perilously, but the law of inertia was persistent. It was finally managed to cut down the jump of the bag of potatoes from 10 to 3 feet—but anyway the slide was rigidly condemned by official order.

And naturally that was all that was needed to make the contraption thoroughly popular with the school children. Of course the sled was taken off, but that did not prevent excursions on the slide. Pieces of board came in handy as substitutes, and as they worked it out the slide became an established success; nor were there any casualties.

These children were typical of those of any army post. There is of course no rank in school—the children of the officer and the noncommissioned officer receive the same instructions. No children are better behaved than those of the old noncom officers. First sergeants with several enlistments as a rule administer their families with almost military discipline. Many noncommissioned officers are ambitious for their sons to go to West Point—this is a somewhat usual ambition. Sons of soldiers take to discipline like ducks to water. One which the writer has particularly in mind—whenever he met his father he would stand straight as an arrow and wait for "orders," and when the word "rest" would be given he would "break ranks with himself" and sprawl all over the place. Moreover, he could ride, swim, shoot and do a perfectly good drill with a rifle.

Family life does not exist in any other army in the world in the sense in which such life is usually construed. In the British army, for example, an officers' mess is a formation—no women attend except on state occasions and the women and children eat alone.

In the United States Army usually the mess hall is very much like a little restaurant, with small tables at which sit little groups of four or six, wives, husbands and kiddies together. The noncommissioned officers and married privates eat at home much as do civilians, responding to the bugle calls much as civilians respond to factory whistles or time clocks. And so, take it all in all, the lot of the "Dinah Shad" of the United States army is a happy one—perhaps it is that so little is needed to make happiness in the army or perhaps it is that love snatched beneath the sword is ever sweet.

Many Hundreds of Foreign Born Girls, German, French and Belgian, Won by Our Boys, Living Happily in Army Posts Where Conditions Are Superior to the Best They Had at Home

Will Another Deluge End the World?

FEW subjects are more fascinating than what will the end of the world be. Will it come in a fiery cataclysm? Or, will heat die away and all life expire under an intense cold? Or will there be a deluge? Some leading geologists have it that this last appears to be more probable than either of the others. Maybe the history of the earth will repeat itself then.

When the Antarctic ice cap began to form aeons ago it commenced pulling the waters of the world over the equator into the Southern Hemisphere. There are prehistoric sea margins which to-day reveal that the ocean once stood at a much higher level than it does to-day. In British Columbia and southward—along the Rocky Mountains, Andes, and highlands of South America—and on the mountain sides and summits of the Old World, these tidal rec-

ords are found; and everywhere at an average of a thousand feet higher than at present.

It has been averred the enormous mass of water now missing is contained in the ice cap of the Antarctic. And the ice cap, increasing in immensity and weight, has slowly but surely displaced the center of the earth's gravity to the southward until it is two or three miles from the position held before the ice cap began to accumulate.

Some scientists deduce more than that. The development, they state, of the immeasurable glaciers at the South Pole is reaching the point which may immediately precede the eruption of them into parts. Then at any time after this danger has come about the breaking up of those many billions of cubic miles of ice will let loose all the accumulated waters of the Southern

Hemisphere. And it comprises four-fifths of the entire waters of this globe. These waters, when thus freed, will set in a flow northward.

They will surge across the equator, bearing on their surface the gigantic remains of the Antarctic ice caps. This oceanic cataclysm will gradually sweep upon Australasia and Africa, and invade the low lying lands of Asia and the Americas and Europe. These will be flooded hundreds of fathoms deep, and the ice fields still afloat remold in their passage the higher contours of the deluged lands. Only the mountain tops can escape.

The disintegration of the glaciers and ice ranges of the Antarctic spells the end of this world to all its inhabited continents, for the waters will engulf them. Mankind will flee to the mountain tops. And where for ages all has been ice and

snow, as at this day, a new hemisphere will come into existence, and life will slowly evolve itself once more.

But, may not something similar have occurred in the primordial past, and proceeding from the Arctic? The Deluge, apart from the Biblical relation of it, is discredited in many quarters to-day. Yet there is no tradition so universal in general terms. It cannot be accounted for on the hypothesis that nations in the same stage of civilization arrive at nearly the same results, for the tradition of a deluge has not been—and is not—confined to civilization. Nor is it to be accounted for by immigrant influences from Asia, invading—say, the Pacific region and the Americas.

What did that good scientist, the late Lord Salisbury, once say? "That science is half imagination. But science is deadly accurate."